

The Status Report

February 2008 | Volume 4, Issue 2

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February is GO RED for WOMEN Awareness Month

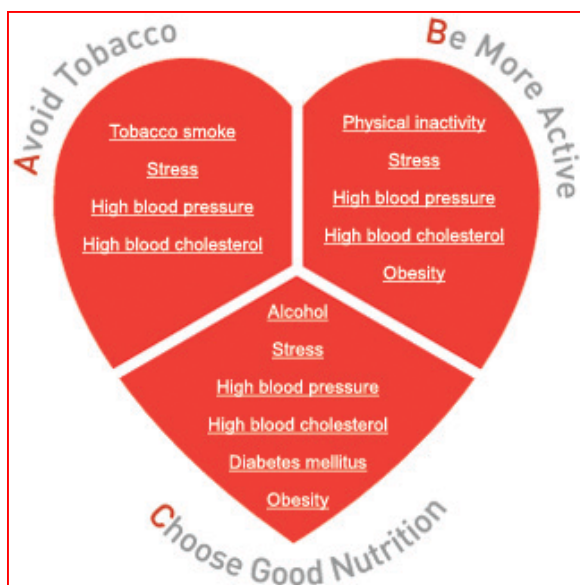


Image provided by American Heart Association.

Heart disease is the number one killer of American women. In fact, it is the cause of one out of every 2.6 female deaths.

The good news is that cardiovascular disease is often preventable. The American Heart Association offers the diagram on the left to demonstrate the ABCs of Preventing Heart Disease, Stroke and Heart Attack and Go Red for Women offers these tips for **10 Ways to Love Your Heart**:

- ♥ Get regular check-ups.
- ♥ Know your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers.
- ♥ Follow your doctor's recommendations for diet and exercise.
- ♥ Take prescribed medications as directed.
- ♥ If you smoke, QUIT NOW.
- ♥ Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each day.
- ♥ Eat a heart-healthy diet, including fruits & vegetables, whole-grain foods and fish.
- ♥ Limit food high in saturated fats and dietary cholesterol.
- ♥ Limit your salt intake to 2300 mg of sodium a day.
- ♥ If you drink alcoholic beverages, drink in moderation—an average of no more than a drink a day for non-pregnant women.

There are many ways you can get involved in Heart Disease Awareness Month. One way is to hold a Wear Red Day in your office. Select a day that works for you and ask your fellow employees to wear red. You can take this one step further by asking those participating employees to donate to Go Red for Women.

You can also institute a company smoking-cessation program, create a healthy-cooking classes group, or start a lunchtime exercise club.

The Go Red for Women website – www.goredforwomen.org—is a great resource for more information on heart disease and how you can reduce your risk. Log on and take the Go Red Heart CheckUp to assess your risk factors today!

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Executive Director's Corner: Patriots, Politics and Platelets

Today was supposed to be a **real** Super Tuesday. The Massachusetts political primary, featuring a female presidential candidate, was reason enough. But when plans began circulating for the Perfect Patriots Super Bowl Parade, the day's promise skyrocketed exponentially. We believed that those passionate about both politics and Patriots would vote AND attend the parade. But alas, perfection for the Patriots proved to be out of their grasp, and thus the parade out of ours. A bitter pill to swallow, which has left Patriots Nation disbelieving, angry and let down.

Several thoughts on the quest for perfection..... Typically perfection is an illusive, intangible and usually subjective quest which often sets up its pursuer for disappointment and feelings of unworthiness. Personally I don't believe in perfection and think that its pursuit one which leaves one forever unsuccessfully striving for that "one more" thing that would make everything right. Perhaps in the context of football games it is a bit easier to define – based on games won or lost. But even if the Patriots had won the Super Bowl would they have been "perfect"? And although they didn't, why isn't a 18-0 record a "perfect" full season of play? Somehow that outstanding accomplishment has now been completely overshadowed and diminished by the loss of one game.

The impossible search for perfection comes home to roost more with women – who compare themselves to the Super Models that Tom Brady dates, who run themselves into the ground trying to do all and be all to everyone, who make themselves bulimic, addicted or just numb trying to be something they think they should be. I wish that rather than striving for perfection, we would all better live in and enjoy the moments as they come, embrace and value the many wonderful things about ourselves and others, and develop an unshakable belief and commitment to who we are, and what we believe in, which would buffet and protect us from the whims of outside opinion and halt the unattainable quest for "perfection."

Today is primary day – PLEASE VOTE. Many fought long and hard for this right and one only has to visit a Communist country to realize how truly fortunate we are for the democratic rights.....and, responsibilities.... that we enjoy in the United States. Voting is an opportunity to participate in the shaping of our government and it is a right that should not be taken for granted. We are proud that the primary ballot will include a choice for a female president, as well as an African American candidate, AND, that the chance to run for the highest seat in our nation is available to both.

Now about those platelets.....**February is National Go Red for Women** month, a time to highlight the fact that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women and to urge them to take action to prevent it.



Did you know that:

- Cardiovascular disease kills approximately 460,000 women per year.
- More women die of cardiovascular disease than the next five causes of death combined, including cancer.
- One in three women has some form of cardiovascular disease.

Heart disease can largely be prevented. The Go Red For Women movement encourages women to: talk to their doctors about the disease and their risk, quit smoking, lose weight, get up off the couch and become a salt detective. Good advice for us all. For further information go to: www.goredforwomen.org.

Linda Brantley

Commissioner Corner: Spotlight on Pamela Malumphy



Pam Malumphy was recently appointed to the MCSW by the Caucus of Women Legislators. She is currently the Berkshire Regional Director for the Massachusetts Office of Business Development.

She has been active in the community as a councilor at-large on Pittsfield's City Council, as well as serving as a commissioner on the city's Community Development Board, Board of Health, and School Building Needs Commission. She's a charter member of the Berkshire County Commission on the Status of Women and, until September 2007, was its first chair. She is on the Board of Corporators for Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and an active steering committee member of the Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) Pipeline for Berkshire County.

For her many professional and community efforts, she was named the 2005-2006 Woman of Achievement by Berkshire Business and Professional Women. Born and raised in Richmond, Massachusetts and a product of the Pittsfield public school system, Malumphy attended the University of Massachusetts at Amherst where she majored in early childhood education.

Berkshire Commission for Women Celebrates Third Anniversary

The Berkshire Commission on the Status of Women recently celebrated its third anniversary and what has been achieved during that time. With each new year, the Commission has expanded and developed its programs and events. The MCSW is pleased to highlight some of the impressive work undertaken by the Berkshire Commission over the last twelve months.

In October of 2006, the Commission hosted debates between the challengers for the State Senate race. The debate was held in Pittsfield at Girls' Inc. with over 65 individuals attending from the Berkshire County region. Commissioner Susan Brown served as moderator. The event received very good press and attendees' feedback was very positive.

Four months later, in February of 2007, the Commission hosted a Legislative Roundtable discussion open to the public with an emphasis on three topics: teen pregnancy prevention; working to promote women's issues as well as working with female counterparts in the Legislature; pay equity. Dr. Mary Grant, President of Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and former MCSW Commissioner, was master of ceremonies for the event. Women's organizations from throughout the County, including ZONTA, Berkshire Business and Professional Women, Women Helping Empower Neighborhoods and others co-sponsored the event. During the roundtable discussion, the subject of teen pregnancy prevention proved to be the most provocative as members of the delegation, and the audience remain awed by the epidemic number of young people in the county becoming parents. Immediately following the meeting, the Commission had an informal session with MCSW's Executive Director Linda Brantley participating. There seemed no doubt that the Commission would begin to shape its work over the next years on the issue of teen pregnancy prevention and answering the question of how to decrease those statistics.

In the months that followed, the Commission began shaping a mission statement specific to its work focused on teen pregnancy prevention, contacting a nationally renowned community organizer from the University of Michigan to visit the Berkshires, and seeking funding for this project. To date, the Commission is scheduled to host Jay Connor (from UMich) in the Berkshires and has received funding from Berkshire United Way and Berkshire Health Systems in support of its work. The BCCSW is also pursuing funding from the state for continued operating and program support.

In 2007, Susan Brown was elected to the position of Chair and is leading the BCCSW boldly into 2008. Also of note, both Tara Jacobs and Mary O'Brien have been reappointed to the Commission. Presently, there are two open seats which the Commission is actively looking to fill. If you are interested in serving on the Commission and are a resident of Berkshire County, please contact the MCSW at 617-626-6520 or MCSW@state.ma.us.

New England Women's Commissions Hold Winter Meeting



Sylvia Gale (NH Commission), Pat Nickerson (Boston Commission), Marie Turley (Boston Commission), Jackie Cooke (Department of Labor), Kimberly Sansoucy (Cambridge Commission), Wendy Love (VT Commission), Linda Brantley (MA Commission), Teresa Younger (CT Commission)

The New England Women's Commissions held their winter meeting at St. Anselm's College in Manchester, NH on Friday, January 25.

In attendance were: Linda Brantley, ED of the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, chair; Sylvia Gale, ED of the New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women; Wendy Love, ED Vermont Commission on Women; Teresa Younger, ED, Connecticut Permanent Commission on the Status of Women; Jacqueline Cooke and Angela Rizzolo from the US Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, Region One; Marie Turley, ED and Pat Nickerson of the Boston Women's Commission; and Kimberly Sansoucy, ED of the Cambridge Women's Commission.

The agenda included Commission sharing, updates from the Women's Bureau and focused discussion. Most compared work on legislative and public policy advocacy around pay equity and economic self sufficiency, paid sick days, women's

health issues and family friendly policies.

The CT Commission has just launched a year-long 35 anniversary celebration as the MCSW approaches its 10 year anniversary. The New England Women's Commissions meet three times a year and also includes representation from Maine and Rhode Island.

Legislative Corner: We Need Your Help with Several Important Bills!

Paid Sick Days Bill S(1073): The Paid Sick Days bill is being debated in the Joint Committee on Labor & Workforce Development. Your help is needed to get a favorable vote. Please call your legislators to advocate on behalf of this important legislation. The Paid Sick Days bill (House 1803/ Senate 1073), would ensure that all Massachusetts workers have a minimum of seven days of paid time off annually to take care of their own health needs and those of family members. Guaranteeing seven earned paid sick days annually provides the following benefits:

- Allows workers time to deal with their own health problems.
- Reduces the spread of disease at work, creating public health benefits,
- Allows workers time off to care for a sick child and not have to worry that they may lose their job
- Provides workers time to care for an infirm elderly parent.

For legislator information go to www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.php or contact the State House switch board at 617-722-2000.

SAMPLE MESSAGES

House of Representatives

My name is ___ and I live in (town). I strongly support House bill 1803 the Paid Sick Days Act and urge your support too. In Massachusetts nearly half of all workers don't have a single paid sick day. Everyone gets sick and deserves to be able to take care of themselves, or their family without losing a days pay and possibly losing their job. The Paid Sick Days Act would ensure that all Massachusetts workers have 7 days of paid time off a year to take care of their own illness or that of an immediate family member. I urge you to call Chairman Torrisi and tell him you support the Paid Sick Day Act, House Bill 1803, and give it a favorable report. [Note: If your representative is Co-Chair. Torrisi, ask directly that he support the bill].

Senate

My name is ___ and I live in (town). I strongly support Senate bill 1073 the Paid Sick Days Act and urge your support too. In Massachusetts nearly half of all workers don't have a single paid sick day. Everyone gets sick and deserves to be able to take care of themselves, or their family without losing a days pay and possibly losing their job. The Paid Sick Days Act would ensure that all Massachusetts workers have 7 days of paid time off annually to take care of their own illness or that of an immediate family member. Please call Chairman McGee and thank him for supporting the Paid Sick Days Act, Senate bill 1073. [Senate members of the Joint Committee, McGee; Co-Chair, Jehlen, Resor, Augustus, Hedlund and formerly, Tolman, thank them directly for supporting the bill Sen. Buoniconti is new to the committee ask his support.]

Support the Health Education Bill Today!

We need your help. It is time to ask your legislators to support the Health Education Bill! This legislation (Senate Bill 288/ House Bill 597) would add age-appropriate health education, as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Education's Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, into the core curriculum for all public schools. This bill will ensure that all young people receive the life-saving information that they need and deserve to stay safe and healthy.

The Joint Committee on Education held a hearing on the Health Education Bill in late spring. The Committee will decide very soon whether or not the bill will move forward this year. So action needs to be taken to ensure this important bill receives a favorable report! Please contact your legislators and ask that they urge the Education Committee to vote in favor of the bill. They need to hear from you today!

You can contact your legislator by email or phone. We have included a sample email below. Legislator email addresses and phone numbers can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/legis/>. Or you can call the State House switchboard at 617-722-2000 and ask to be connected to your legislator's office. Information on your elected official can be found at www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.php.

Below is the sample letter:

Dear (insert legislator's name),

I am writing as your constituent to ask that you urge the Joint Committee on Education to vote to give the Health Education Bill (Senate Bill 288/House Bill 597) a favorable report. I strongly support adding health education into the core curriculum for public schools in Massachusetts. Health education saves lives. Young people need access to comprehensive health education in order to make responsible decisions, prevent disease, reduce risky behaviors, and lead healthy lives. The Health Education Bill would ensure that the young people of the Commonwealth receive the health education that they need and deserve to stay safe and healthy.

Adding medically accurate, age appropriate health education to the core curriculum will give students the information they need about critically important topics such as nutrition and fitness, mental health, safety and injury prevention, reproduction and sexuality, substance abuse and violence prevention.

For these reasons, I ask that you urge the Joint Committee on Education to vote in favor of this bill. As your constituent, I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

(your name and address)

If the legislator has any questions, please ask them to contact Ellen Wallace, 617-603-1672 or ewallace@gbls.org; or Darrell Villaruz from Kay Kahn's office Darrell.Villaruz@state.ma.us or Megan Shannon from Pat Jehlen's office Megan.Shannon@state.ma.us.

Now Seeking Corporate Sponsors for the 5th Annual Unsung Heroines Awards

The nomination process is complete and the MCSW is currently seeking corporate sponsors for our 5th Annual Unsung Heroines Awards. Sponsorship levels range from \$150 all the way to \$10,000 with benefits including (but not limited to) advertising space in our event day program book, logo and link on our website, and listings in the hundreds of press releases distributed in the months leading up to the event.

Sponsorship forms are available for download on our website at www.mass.gov/women. We encourage you to pledge your sponsorship early to enjoy the full benefits of your support.

Please contact Program Coordinator Kim Sebastiao at Kimberly.Sebastiao@state.ma.us or 617-626-6521 with any questions.

An Act to Protect and Enhance the Rights of Child and Adult Victims and Witnesses of Crime

On January 28th, 2008, the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) hosted an Advocacy Day for Victim Rights at the Massachusetts State House. This event was an opportunity to demonstrate widespread support for the swift passage and enactment of Senate Bill 802, MOVA's legislation to amend and strengthen the Victim Bill of Rights.

This long overdue legislation, informed by a large and diverse number of victims/survivors, victim service providers, criminal justice personnel, and others from across the state, amends and strengthens the existing Victim Bill of Rights (MGL Ch. 258B). It will, when passed, reinstate Massachusetts as a leader in affording rights to victims and witnesses of crime. Important highlights of the provisions of this legislation include:

- broader notification of victim rights, including making notice available and accessible to non-English speaking victims and witnesses, and to families of victims in unsolved homicides, among others.
- a fundamental provision for security in the Commonwealth's courthouses for victims and witnesses – specifically, with a separate and secure waiting area in all courthouses, as promised by this very victim rights law over 20 years ago. This will significantly help protect against all too common threats and intimidation of witnesses when they come to court.
- specific rights for victims and witnesses who are children, elders, or victims with disabilities, including having a support person in the courtroom during their testimony, providing a general orientation to the courtroom and court procedures, and allowing for Victim Impact Statements to be provided via audio or video as necessary.

This important legislation will be heard soon and MOVA needs your support! The public hearing is the key opportunity to demonstrate to lawmakers that we, as a community, are committed to protecting and strengthening our Victim Bill of Rights, and want S.802 passed NOW.

WHEN: Tuesday, March 4th, 2008 (1pm)
WHERE: Massachusetts State House, Boston (Room TBA)
WHO: You and hundreds of supporters of victim rights

There are literally hundreds of pieces of legislation that the Judiciary Committee is considering -- without your voices, S.802 will get lost in the shuffle. We urge you to join MOVA and supporters of the legislation at the hearing so we can send the message LOUDLY AND CLEARLY that the Commonwealth must reaffirm its commitment to rights and services for child and adult victims and witnesses of crime.

More details will follow. Please let MOVA know if you plan to attend. If you have any questions, contact Ashlee Piper, Director of Public Affairs and Field Services at 617.727.5200.

An Act Establishing the Bristol County CSW S1172

We need help in passing Senate Bill 1172! This important piece of legislation would formalize the work of willing, able and engaged citizens of Bristol County who have asked for a commission to serve as a permanent voice for women in their communities. If passed the Bristol County Commission will be charged with recognizing and addressing county-specific needs and will be given the platform to voice those concerns and challenges with state legislators and local elected officials.

The MCSW and women of Bristol County have been working since 2006 with the co-sponsors of S1172, Senator Menard and Representative Haddad, to move this legislation forward. In August the Senate engrossed the bill; it was then referred to House Ways and Means where it has been languishing ever since.

We need the help of Bristol County women and men! If you live in Bristol County please contact your legislators now, and help pass this important bill! **Ask them to speak with their colleagues serving on House Ways and Means and request that the bill be reported out.**

Legislator email addresses and phone numbers can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/legis/>. Or you can call the State House switchboard at 617-722-2000 and ask to be connected to your legislator's office. Information on your elected official can be found at <http://www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.php>. For more information, please call 617-626-6520 or email mcsw@state.ma.us.

MCSW Welcomes New Interns

Cecelia Auditore, a senior at Emmanuel College, brings to the commission an interest in legislative policy and eagerness to learn. She has participated in a number of politically focused organizations on her campus, including Political Forum and EC Democrats. At the MCSW Cecelia is assisting the Legislative and Public Policy Committee. In the future, she plans to enroll in law school.

Kara Meyer is also a senior at Emmanuel College and comes to the MCSW with a major in American Studies. Her interests in women's rights and advancement prompted her to apply for an internship with the MCSW. In her short time at the Commission, she has proved herself invaluable in her support of the Unsung Heroine event. She would like to translate her academic and practical experience into positive social change, and perhaps one day work in the State House.

Melanie O'Malley is a Women's Studies major at UMass Boston and is particularly interested in how the status of women and girls is affected by policy choices made at the state and federal level. Melanie approaches each question with a critical eye and veracious curiosity. While at the MCSW she is coordinating and developing the commission's research on the status of women in Massachusetts. In the future she hopes to enroll in law school.

Heather Panahi is a student in the Program for Women in Politics and Public Policy at UMass Boston. She is on sabbatical from her position as a teacher at Dana Hall School, where she also serves as a Model UN Coach. Her interests are focused on training young women for positions of leadership. Heather helps coordinate the MCSW's efforts around pay equity. She is looking forward to returning to Dana Hall in the fall, enriched by her experiences at PWPPP and MCSW.

Stephanie Rodil is a senior at Salem State and will graduate in the spring with a major in Sociology. She comes to the commission with a deep interest in advocacy and a desire to expand her academic knowledge with practical experience. Made curious by women's studies courses, she applied to the Commission and is currently supporting the MCSW's Outreach and Advocacy Committee. Stephanie hopes to continue to graduate school, potentially to study issues of race and gender.

Feel Safe Again, Inc. Increases Stalking Awareness

January was Stalking Awareness Month, and Feel Safe Again, Inc. a statewide grassroots non-profit organization for victims of stalking worked diligently to educate the public by holding events and activities throughout the month. In addition to its efforts during the month of January, Feel Safe Again, Inc. will hold its First Annual Stalking Conference in collaboration with the Massachusetts State Police, the National Center for Victims of Crime - Stalking Resource Center, and AWARE (Arming Women Against Rape and Endangerment) at the Devens Common Center in Devens, Massachusetts on Friday, March 14, 2008, from 8:00am-5:30pm.

"We are extremely excited to be hosting our first conference," said Cheryl Darisse, founder and president. "We are offering a very personal presentation regarding the stalking and murder of my sister, Sandra Berfield, who was killed on January 20, 2000, by a package-bomb her stalker hand-delivered to her in Everett, Massachusetts," said Darisse.

Massachusetts State Senator Pamela P. Resor, (Middlesex/Worcester), sponsor of "Sandy's Law", will be the opening speaker for this multidisciplinary conference. Darisse, Massachusetts State Police Fire and Explosion Investigation Section troopers, a chemist from the Massachusetts State Crime Lab, and an expert from the Massachusetts Coalition of Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Programs will also present. Additional expert speakers include, Sandy Bromley, JD from the National Center for Victims of Crime - Stalking Resource Center, and Debra A. Pinals, M.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, author of "Stalked: Psychiatric Perspectives and Practical Approaches", and the Medical Director for the Central Massachusetts Area Department of Mental Health.

Keynote speaker for the Fourth Annual Benefit Dinner following the conference will be Lyn Bates, stalking expert, author of "Safety for Stalking Victims" and cofounder of AWARE. A panel discussion, including a stalking survivor, a victim witness advocate, and Debbie Riddle, sister of stalking victim Peggy Klinke, who was instrumental in establishing January as National Stalking Awareness Month will follow the keynote address.

If you are interested in attending, you can purchase tickets and register Online, or mail a completed registration form with payment to Feel Safe Again, Inc. P.O. Box 490188, Everett, Massachusetts 02149. The registration deadline is March 7, 2008. For additional information, call (888) 99B-SAFE or email info@feelsafeagain.org.

Take Action. Get Educated. Get Involved.

If you are interested in becoming more involved in the movement to advance women in the Commonwealth you can start by attending any one of the number of events and meetings taking place across the state in the coming weeks.

Thursday, February 7 (8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.): Boston Go Red For Women Luncheon and Educational Forum

Location: The Westin Boston Waterfront (425 Summer Street, Boston)

Details: The Go Red for Women Luncheon and Educational Forum takes a critical step toward raising women's awareness that heart disease is their number-one cause of death. Women who understand their risks of heart disease, and know the steps to prevent it, are better equipped to avert this serious – and mostly preventable – health threat. The Luncheon mixes education, passion for the cause and a fun and entertaining fashion show. For more details please contact Michelle Carvalho at (508) 656-2011 or michelle.carvalho@heart.org.

Tuesday, February 19 (3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.): Massachusetts Coalition for Women's Wage Equality Meeting

Location: Charles F. Hurley Building, Directors Conference Room 3rd Floor (19 Staniford Street, Boston)

Details: Members of the MA Coalition for Women's Wage Equality will meet to discuss next steps in passing wage equity-related legislation, Equal Pay Day and hosting pay equity events. Anyone interested in joining this growing Coalition should contact MCSW Outreach Coordinator Jill Ashton at 617-626-6525 or jill.ashton@state.ma.us.

Thursday, February 14 (9:00 a.m.): Massachusetts White Ribbon Day 2008

Location: Massachusetts State House (Boston)

Details: Men across Massachusetts are encouraged wear a White Ribbon to show their solidarity with other men who pledge "to not commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women, sexual assault and domestic violence." The campaign invites all men - heterosexual, gay, bisexual and transgender - to challenge the traditional notions of masculinity that equate strength with violence and control and to help create a world free of abuse. JDI member organizations and White Ribbon Day Affiliates throughout Massachusetts will hold community activities on February 14th and in the following months. A calendar of events is available at www.janedoe.org/whiteribbonday. To find out how you can get involved, contact Craig Norberg-Bohm at cnorbergbohm@janedoe.org or 617-248-0922.

Friday, March 14 (8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.): Feel Safe Again, Inc. & MA State Police 1st Annual Stalking Conference and 4th Annual Benefit Dinner

Location: Devens Common Center (31 Andrews Parkway, Devens)

Details: This training event is recommended for victim service providers, law enforcement professionals, fire and rescue professionals, emergency medical technicians, attorneys, judges, legislators, mental health professionals, youth counselors, and others involved in supporting victims of crime, as well as victims and survivors of stalking. For more information please visit www.feelsafeagain.org/conference.html.

Do you have an event you would like to see on this list in an upcoming issue of The Status Report? E-mail the details to Program Coordinator Kim Sebastiao at Kimberly.sebastiao@state.ma.us and we will do our best to include your event in our next issue.

SAVE THE DATE!

MARCH 7, 2008


7:30 A.M. - 9:30 A.M.

11th Annual
International Women's Day Breakfast

*Women's Economic Self-Sufficiency:
Globally & Locally*

Simmons College
Linda K. Paresky Conference Center

For more information please contact
Diane Hammer at diane.hammer@simmons.edu.



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Stephanie Rodil (Salem State)



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**Do you have questions or comments about this
newsletter? If so, please contact**

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